

# **Electric Works Public Opinion Poll: Report of Findings**

PREPARED FOR

Greater Fort Wayne Inc.

**June 2018**

# Executive Summary

## Summary Statement

Residents of Fort Wayne and Allen County have heard about Electric Works, the name given to the redevelopment of the former GE small engine factory near downtown Fort Wayne, and they like what they've heard. People in this area are generally very favorable to private-public partnership economic development projects, based on their positive experiences with Parkview Field and the Clyde Theater, and they hold favorable views toward upcoming projects such as Riverfront Development, the Downtown Event Center, and Electric Works. Overall, people in Fort Wayne and Allen County are pro-economic development.

The poll also discovered some disturbing facts. More than half of city and county residents were unaware of the fact that the Electric Works project cannot move forward without an additional \$65 million in local funding. When informed of this fact, ***two-thirds of city and county residents say they support the use of local, public funds for the Electric Works redevelopment project, including the use of Legacy funds, because they recognize the transformational potential of the project.***

And that's the crux of the matter. One of the main reasons most Fort Wayne and Allen County Residents are favorable toward Electric Works is that they recognize the redevelopment project holds the promise of cleaning up dilapidated buildings and turning the old General Electric campus into a revitalized neighborhood with shopping, entertainment, a year-round public market, and an educational space for K-12 and higher education. The more residents hear about Electric Works, the more they like it. Favorability towards Electric Works increased from an already high favorability of 86% among Residents of Allen County and 87% among Residents of Fort Wayne based on their top-of-mind awareness of the project; it increased to 91% for both when they were read a description of Electric Works and its planned components.

Poll results demonstrate conclusively that public and private investment and revitalization and renewal are the principal reasons city and county residents support Electric Works. They see the redevelopment as a unique opportunity to transform a decaying landscape into a new and thriving neighborhood. And, best of all, Electric Works will generate jobs.

## Major Findings

1. Public sentiment is strongly pro-development. Economic development and the cleaning up of old, dilapidated buildings and industrial sites are very important issues to residents of Fort Wayne and Allen County.
2. The public approves of past and current efforts to revitalize the economies of the city and the county. Residents of Allen County and Fort Wayne are overwhelmingly favorable to public-private sector economic development projects, both past and present, that restore growth and beautify the city and region.
3. Three in four Fort Wayne and Allen County Residents have heard of Electric Works, but there is a great deal of confusion about the funding for the project. Less than half of those who have heard of it are aware the project is being held up by a lack of funding. Further, these residents aren't sure which funding source (local, state, federal, or private) is causing the delay.
4. Two-thirds of Allen County Residents support the use of local funds, including Legacy funds, for the Electric Works redevelopment project. A majority of residents believe that Electric Works is a transformational project that will provide long-lasting economic benefits shared by everyone in Allen County and they are excited about it.
5. Residents of Fort Wayne and Allen County are highly favorable to the Electric Works redevelopment project. Planned components that are viewed most favorably include shopping, restaurants, and entertainment such as live music, a year-round public market, and an educational space for K-12 and higher education.

# Methodology

The *Electric Works Public Opinion Poll* was conducted by Campos Research and Strategy (Campos) for Greater Fort Wayne Inc. from June 3, to June 21, 2018. This study was administered online and by telephone using a single survey instrument. A total of 600 respondents completed the survey: 400 online from a consumer panel and 200 by phone (random digit dialing plus purchased lists of land-line phone numbers and mobile phone numbers).

Quotas were established prior to fielding to ensure that a representative sample of respondents was obtained for each of Fort Wayne's 6 City Council districts and for each of Allen County's 4 County Council districts. All results are Census-balanced to reflect Allen County's population by geography and demographics, including gender, age, household income, education, and ethnicity.

Campos implemented quality control measures to ensure that every respondent was placed into the correct City Council and County Council district:

- Respondents who took the survey online were provided with color-coded district and council maps and then asked to select the one that included their household location. Those who could not identify their household location using the maps typed in their address and were later placed into the correct city and/or county district during the coding process.
- Respondents who took the survey by phone and were unsure of the city or council district were asked to provide information on their household location. They were placed into the correct districts during the coding process.

The margin of error associated with the sample is +/- 4.0%, at the 95<sup>th</sup> confidence interval level. The margin of error is higher for sub-groups.

The following terms are used throughout the report:

- Allen County Residents—all 600 respondents.
- Fort Wayne Residents—all 491 respondents who live in the city of Fort Wayne.
- County Residents outside of Fort Wayne—109 respondents who live in Allen county, outside of Fort Wayne.

## About Campos Research & Strategy

Campos is a Pittsburgh-based, independent, full-service market research and strategy firm founded in 1986. Our clients include private sector companies such as PPG Industries and HarbisonWalker International, trade associations, colleges and universities, and not-for-profit organizations such as Highmark Health and the United Way. Campos is dedicated to helping clients understand and innovate their customer experience and their brand.

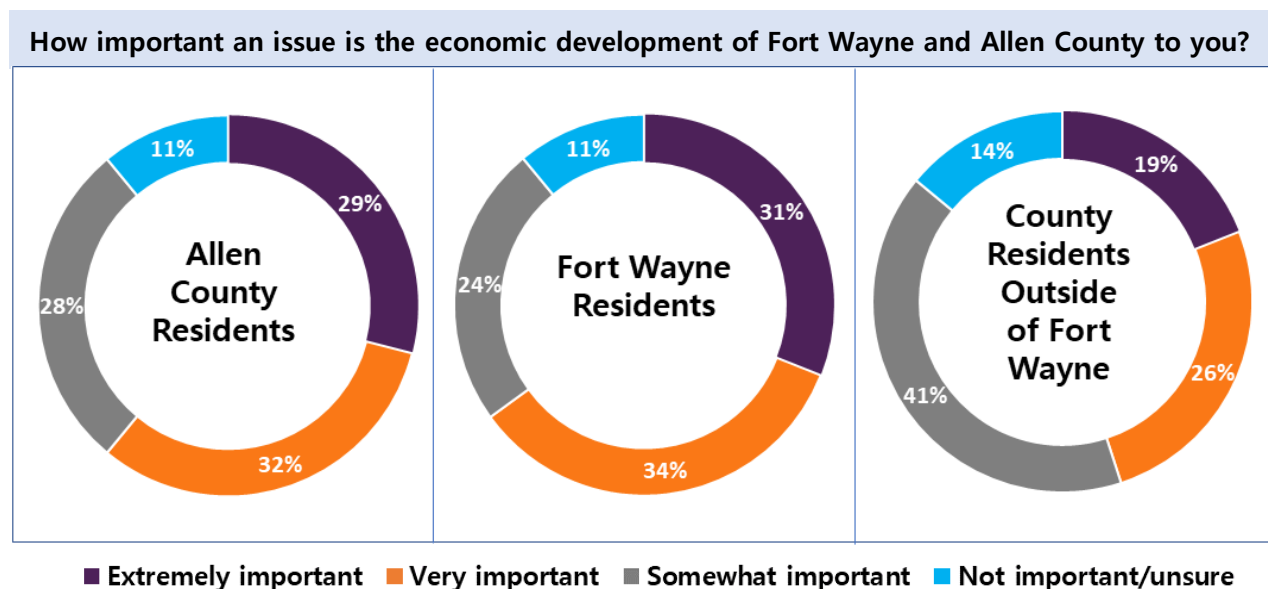
## Detailed Findings

### 1. Public sentiment is strongly pro-development. Economic development and the cleaning up of old, dilapidated buildings and industrial sites are very important issues to residents of Fort Wayne and Allen County.

Sixty-one percent of county residents say economic development of the city and county is “very important;” an even higher percentage of Allen County Residents say the same.

More than 3 in 5 Allen County Residents (61%) indicate that the economic development of Fort Wayne and Allen County is either “extremely important” or “very important” to them personally. An additional 28% say it is “somewhat important.” Thus, nearly 9 in 10 Allen County Residents (89%) believe that economic development is important to them personally.

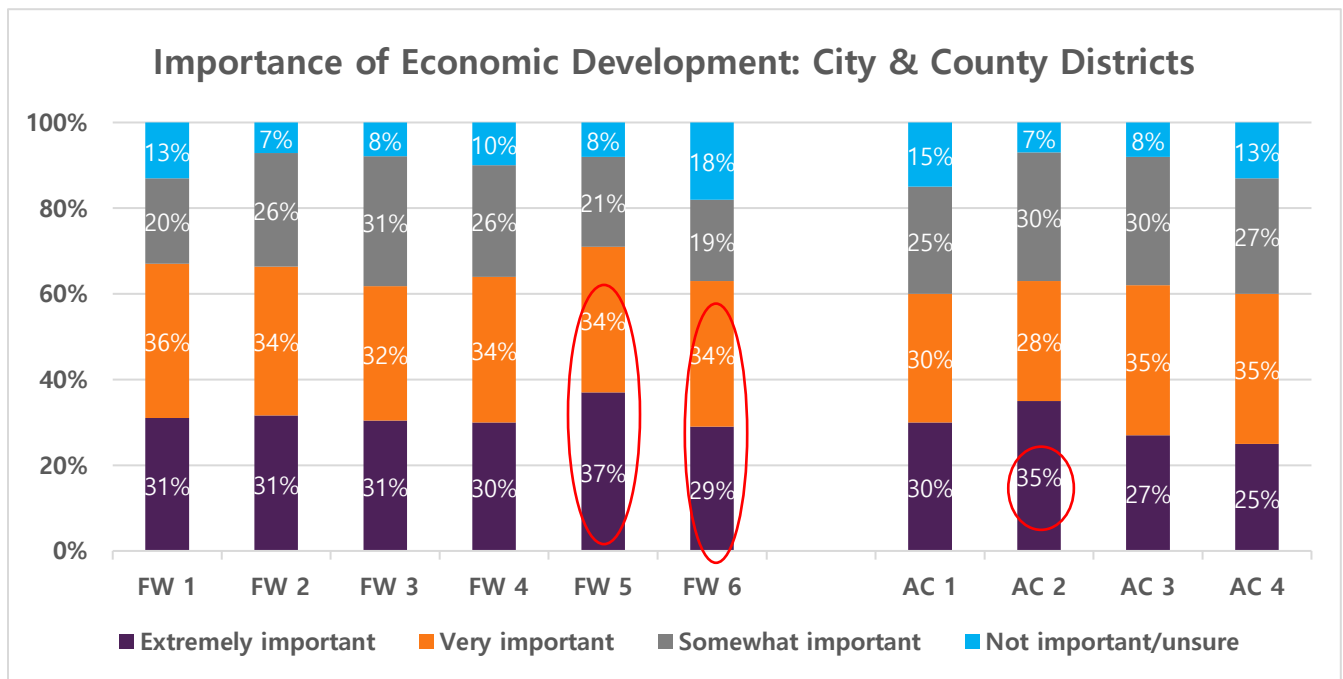
Economic development of the city and county are more important to Fort Wayne Residents (65% “extremely important” or “very important”) compared to all Allen County Residents (61%) and County Residents outside of Fort Wayne (45%). Still, 86% of County Residents outside of Fort Wayne consider economic development to be important.



### Perceived importance of economic development differs little by city or council district.

As the chart on the next page demonstrates, the perceived importance of economic development does not vary much by either City Council district or County Council district.

- Residents of Fort Wayne City Council District 5 were the most likely to indicate that the economic development of Fort Wayne and Allen County was important (71% “extremely important” or “very important”). Residents of Fort Wayne City Council District 6 were the least likely (63%).
- Residents of Allen County Council District 2 were more likely to indicate that the economic development of Fort Wayne and Allen County was important (63% “extremely important” or “very important”). In fact, more than 1 in 3 (35%) said economic development was “extremely important.”



Large majorities of demographic sub-groups consider economic development to be important. Its perceived importance is higher among Democrats and Independents.

College graduates, residents with household incomes greater than \$75,000, and residents ages 35-54 were most likely to indicate that the economic development of Fort Wayne and Allen County was important to them. It is more important to Democrats and Independents than Republicans.

#### All Allen County Residents

#### Economic Development of Fort Wayne and Allen County is Important

Demographic	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important/Unsure
Male	30%	34%	26%	10%
Female	29%	32%	29%	10%
18-34	29%	30%	28%	13%
35-54	34%	32%	25%	9%
55+	21%	40%	34%	5%
High School or less	30%	28%	26%	16%
Some College	24%	31%	32%	13%
College graduate	32%	38%	26%	4%
<\$25,000	27%	26%	31%	16%
\$25,000-\$49,999	31%	29%	31%	9%
\$50,000-\$74,999	24%	38%	29%	9%
\$75,000+	36%	44%	16%	4%

**Allen County Republicans**  
63% important  
(24% very)

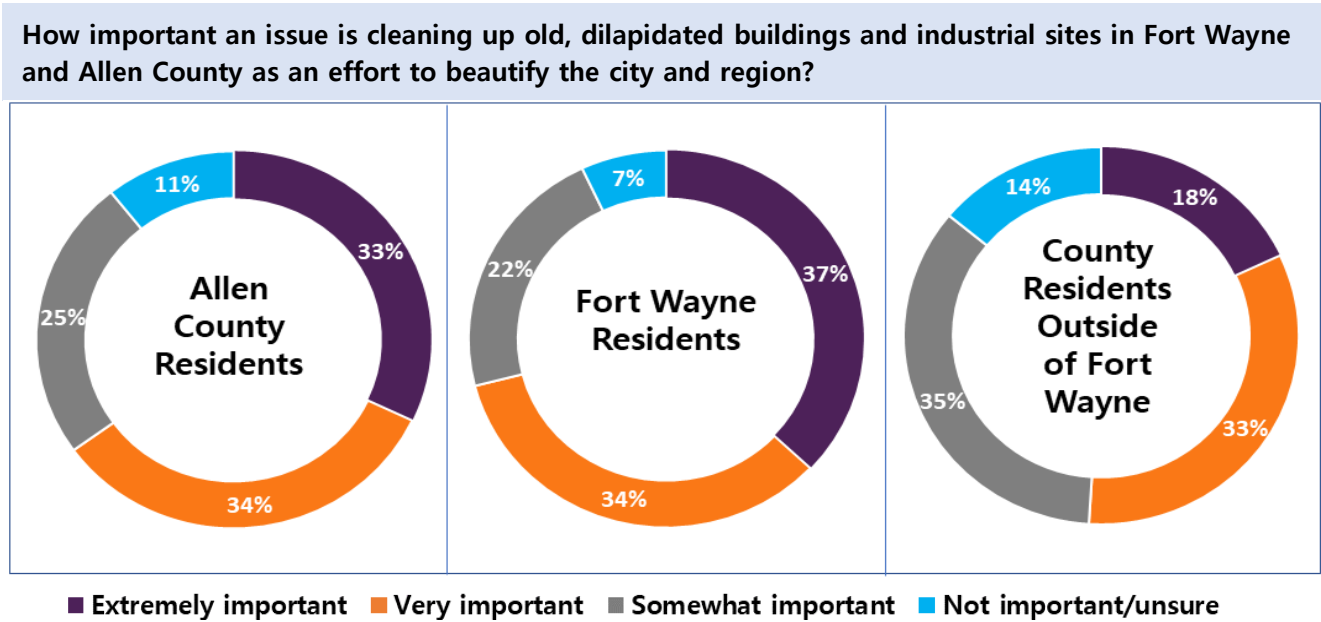
**Allen County Democrats**  
70% important  
(38% very)

**Allen County Independents**  
67% support  
(35% important)

**It's time to clean up old, dilapidated building and industrial sites.**

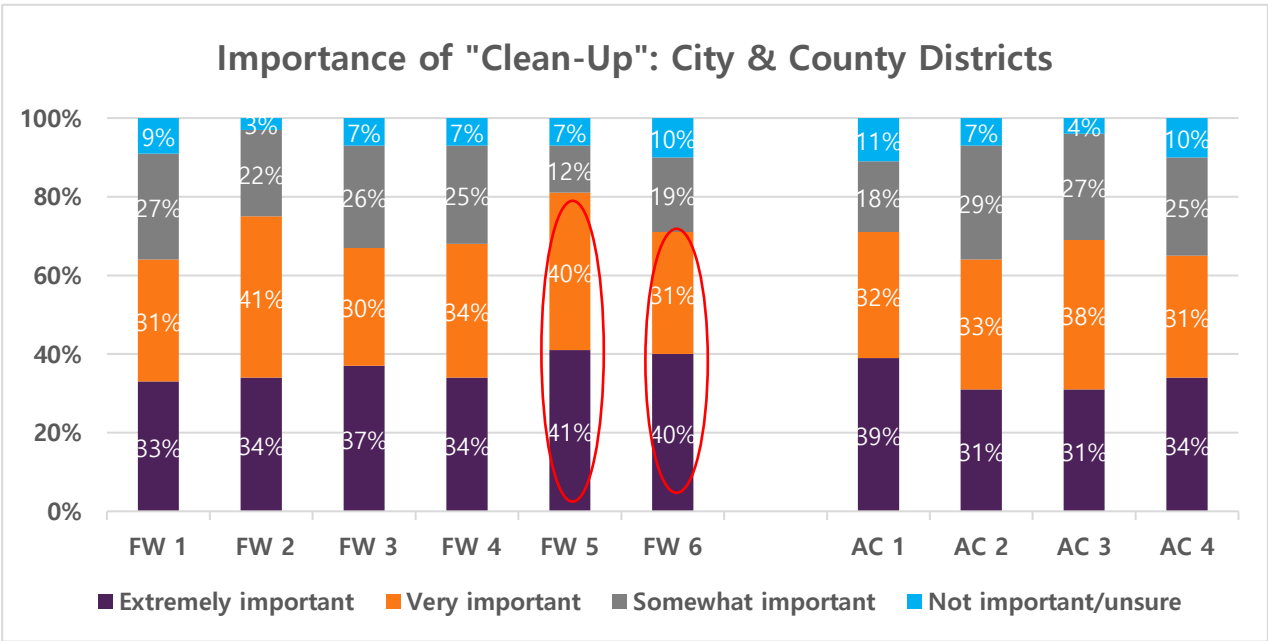
Two in three Allen County Residents (67%) indicate that the cleaning up of old, dilapidated buildings and industrial sites in Fort Wayne and Allen County as an effort to beautify the city and region is either "extremely important" or "very important." An additional 25% say it is "somewhat important." Similar to sentiments regarding economic development, 89% of residents consider this "cleaning up" to be important.

Fort Wayne Residents are more likely to view the clean-up as important. More than 7 in 10 (71%) say it is "extremely" or "very" important.



**Cleaning up old, dilapidated buildings and industrial sites is most important to residents of Fort Wayne City Council Districts 5 and 6.**

This issue is important to everyone, but especially city residents in Districts 5 and 6.



Cleaning up old, dilapidated buildings and industrial sites is important to all, but there are differences.

This issue is more important to residents with lower- and higher-income residents than those in the middle-income range, and to those who have not attended college. Similar to economic development, this issue is more important to Democrats and Independents.

#### All Allen County Residents

#### Cleaning up old, dilapidated building and industrial sites is important

Demographic	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important/ Unsure
Male	32	33	22	13
Female	34	34	26	6
18-34	35	30	24	11
35-54	34	39	23	4
55+	25	39	30	6
High School or less	38	26	21	15
Some College	31	38	23	8
College graduate	30	38	29	3
<\$25,000	38	25	28	9
\$25,000-\$49,999	32	32	26	10
\$50,000-\$74,999	24	43	28	5
\$75,000+	41	42	13	4

Allen County  
Republicans  
62% important  
(24% very)

Allen County  
Democrats  
74% important  
(40% very)

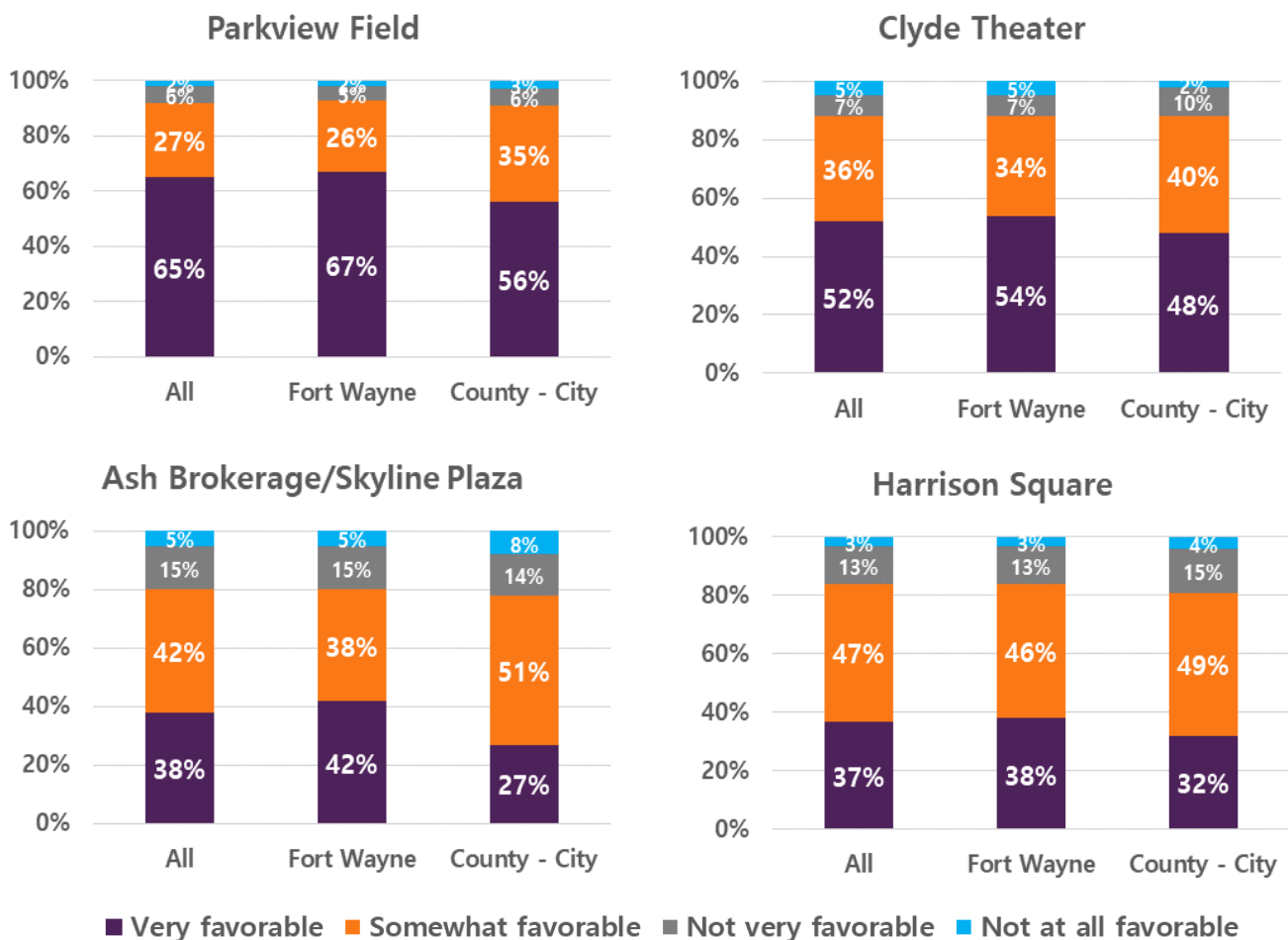
Allen County  
Independents  
74% important  
(33% very)



**2. The public likes what it sees in past and current efforts to revitalize the economies of the city and county. Residents of Allen County and Fort Wayne are overwhelmingly favorable to public-private sector economic development projects, both past and present, that restore growth and beautify the city and region.**

**Eighty percent of county residents view past economic development projects that resulted from public-private partnerships favorably.**

City and county residents approve of past economic development projects in the city and county. Favorability is highest for Parkview Field (92% favorably, 65% “very favorably”) and Clyde Theater (88% favorably, 52% “very favorably”), but Ash Brokerage Building/Skyline Plaza and Harrison Square are also viewed favorably. County Residents outside of Fort Wayne are less favorable but still hold positive views about past developments.



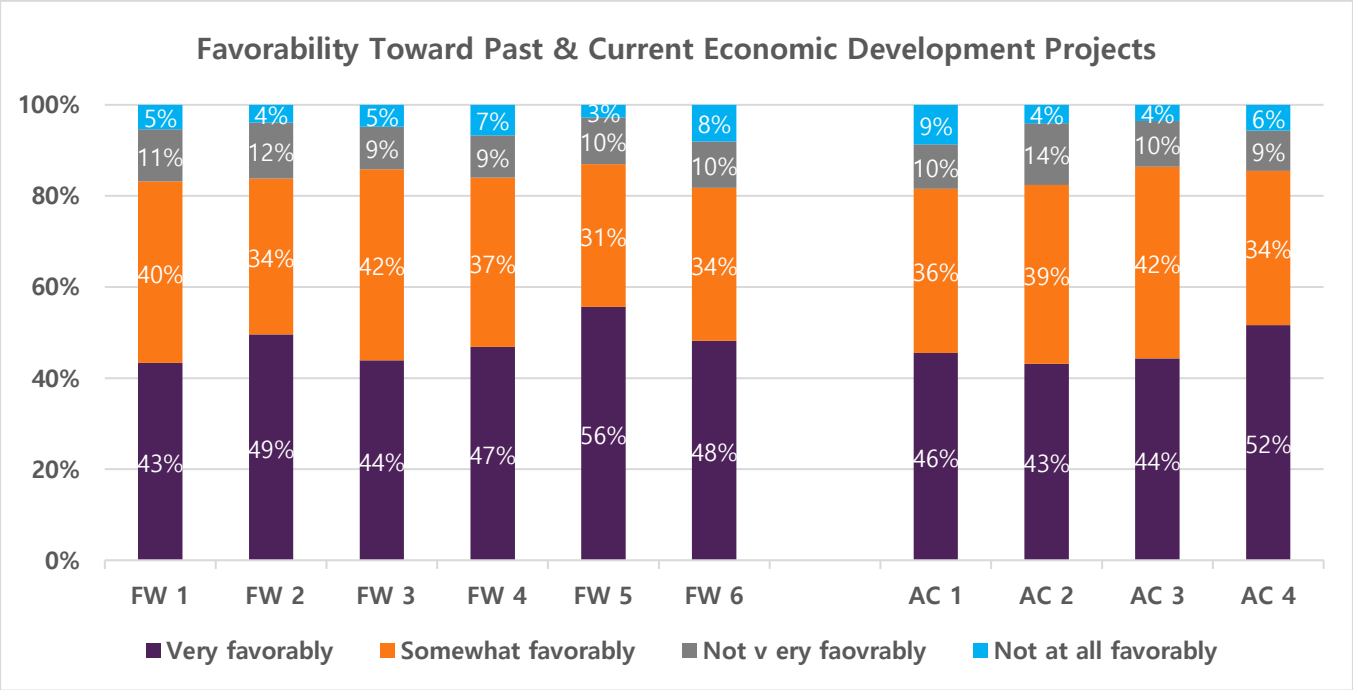
**Residents are as favorable—or even more so—of economic development projects that are planned or are in development.**

City and county residents are excited about new economic development projects that are planned or are in development, including Electric Works, Riverfront Development, Downtown Event Center, The Landing, and STEAM Park. The same pattern emerges as with past economic development projects: Fort Wayne Residents are more favorable then County Residents outside of Fort Wayne, but these residents are still highly favorable. As the charts below illustrate, nearly half of Allen County Residents view new developments at Electric Works, Riverfront Development, and Downtown Event Center “very favorably.”



**Residents from all city and county districts are favorable to these economic development projects; some districts embrace them more strongly.**

Campos aggregated the favorability ratings for all 9 economic projects that have been completed or are in development. Then the averages across them were calculated for each City and County Council District. As the chart below illustrates, economic development projects enjoy high favorability in all areas of the city and county. Residents of Fort Wayne City Council District 5 and Allen County Council District 4 are most favorable.



**County residents of all types are favorable to past and current economic developments projects.**

Aggregating favorability ratings and then displaying averages by demographics and political affiliations shows just how positively residents of all backgrounds view these projects. As the table on the following page illustrates:

- Women are more favorable than men.
- There are few differences in favorability by age.
- Residents with the highest household income are most favorable.
- Democrats are most favorable, but Independents and Republican are not far behind.

## Favorability toward past and current economic development projects

Demographic	Very favorably	Somewhat favorably	Not very favorably	Not at all favorably
Male	44%	37%	10%	8%
Female	50%	35%	10%	4%
18-34	48%	36%	11%	5%
35-54	54%	33%	7%	6%
55+	44%	38%	13%	5%
High School or less	49%	35%	10%	6%
Some College	46%	37%	11%	6%
College graduate	49%	38%	9%	3%
<\$25,000	46%	33%	13%	7%
\$25,000-\$49,999	43%	40%	11%	6%
\$50,000-\$74,999	47%	39%	10%	3%
\$75,000+	49%	41%	7%	4%

**Allen County  
Republicans**  
85% favorably  
(44% very)

**Allen County  
Democrats**  
90% favorably  
(50% very)

**Allen County  
Independents**  
83% favorably  
(48% very)

**3. Three in four Fort Wayne and Allen County Residents have heard of Electric Works, but there is a great deal of confusion about the funding for the project. Less than half of those who have heard of it are aware that the project is being held up by a lack of funding. Further, these residents aren't sure which funding source (local, state, federal, or private) is causing the delay.**

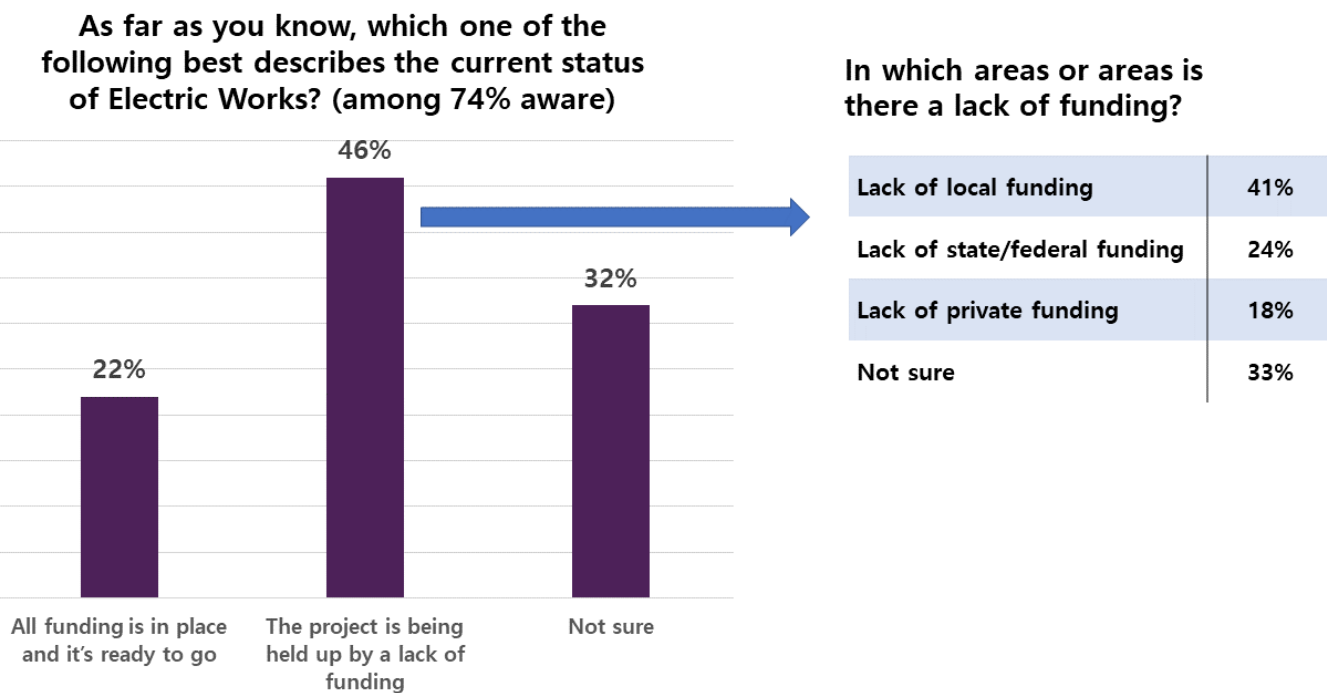
**Level of awareness varies**

Overall, 74% of Allen County and Allen County Residents have heard of Electrics Works. Awareness varies by demographics and geography:

- Awareness is similar across the four County Council districts, but it varies by City Council district, from a low of 69% in District 1 to a high of 81% in District 6.
- Awareness increases with age: 61% of residents ages 18-34 have heard of Electrics Works compared to 81% of people over the age of 35.
- Awareness increases with education: Awareness is 63% for residents who have not attended college, but 84% for college graduates.
- Awareness increases with income: Awareness among households with income of less than \$25,000 is 65%, but it is 81% for those whose household income is greater than \$75,000.

**Confusion about status and funding cuts across all demographics.**

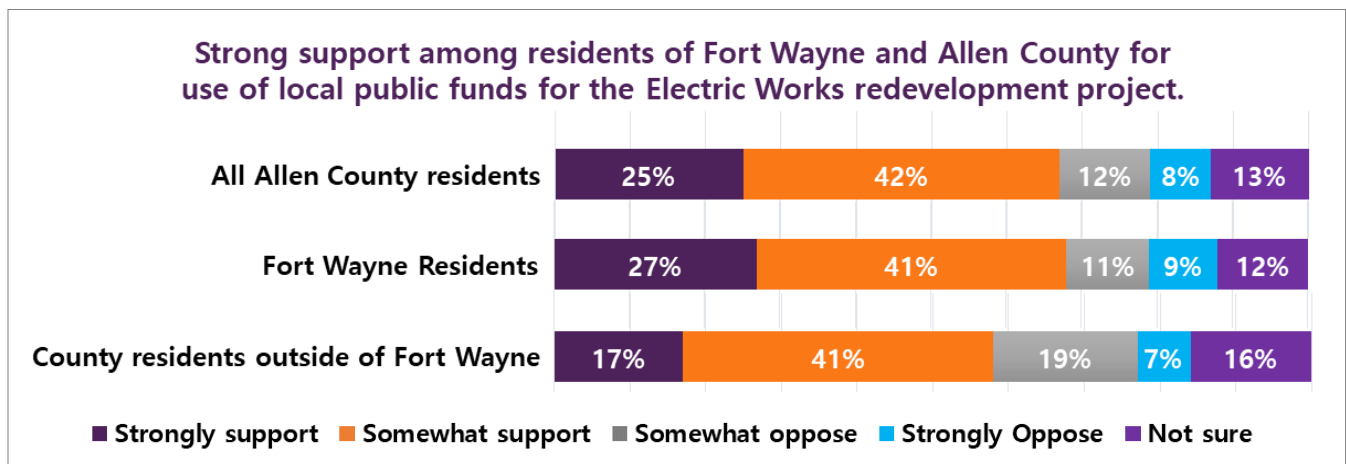
What does not vary is resident's confusion about the current status of Electric Works. As shown below, less than half of Allen County Residents who have heard of Electric Works (46%) know it is being held up by a lack of funding, and these more knowledgeable residents are not sure where that lack of funding originates from. Results for Fort Wayne Residents and County Residents outside of Fort Wayne are similar.



4. Two-thirds of Allen County Residents support the use of local funds, including Legacy funds, for the Electric Works redevelopment project. A majority of residents believe that Electric Works is a transformational project that will provide long-lasting economic benefits shared by everyone in Allen County and they are excited about it.

There is strong support for the use of local, public funds for Electric Works.

The strongest support for the use of local, public funds is among Fort Wayne Residents (68% "strongly support" or "somewhat support"), but a large majority of County Residents outside of Fort Wayne (58%) also support their use for the Electric Works redevelopment project.



Residents of all types support the use of local, public funds for Electric Works.

College-educated residents with higher household incomes and Democrats are more likely to support the use of local, public funds for redevelopment of Electric Works. But support is strong across demographics and political affiliations.

**Support for use of local public funds for Electric Works stronger among some demographics**

Demographic	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat/ Strongly Oppose	Not Sure
Male	26%	42%	23%	9%
Female	25%	42%	19%	14%
18-34	24%	44%	16%	16%
35-54	31%	43%	18%	8%
55+	20%	34%	37%	9%
High School or less	29%	33%	20%	18%
Some College	20%	45%	22%	13%
College graduate	27%	47%	19%	7%
<\$25,000	22%	40%	20%	18%
\$25,000-\$49,999	25%	43%	18%	14%
\$50,000-\$74,999	29%	44%	20%	7%
\$75,000+	31%	42%	19%	8%

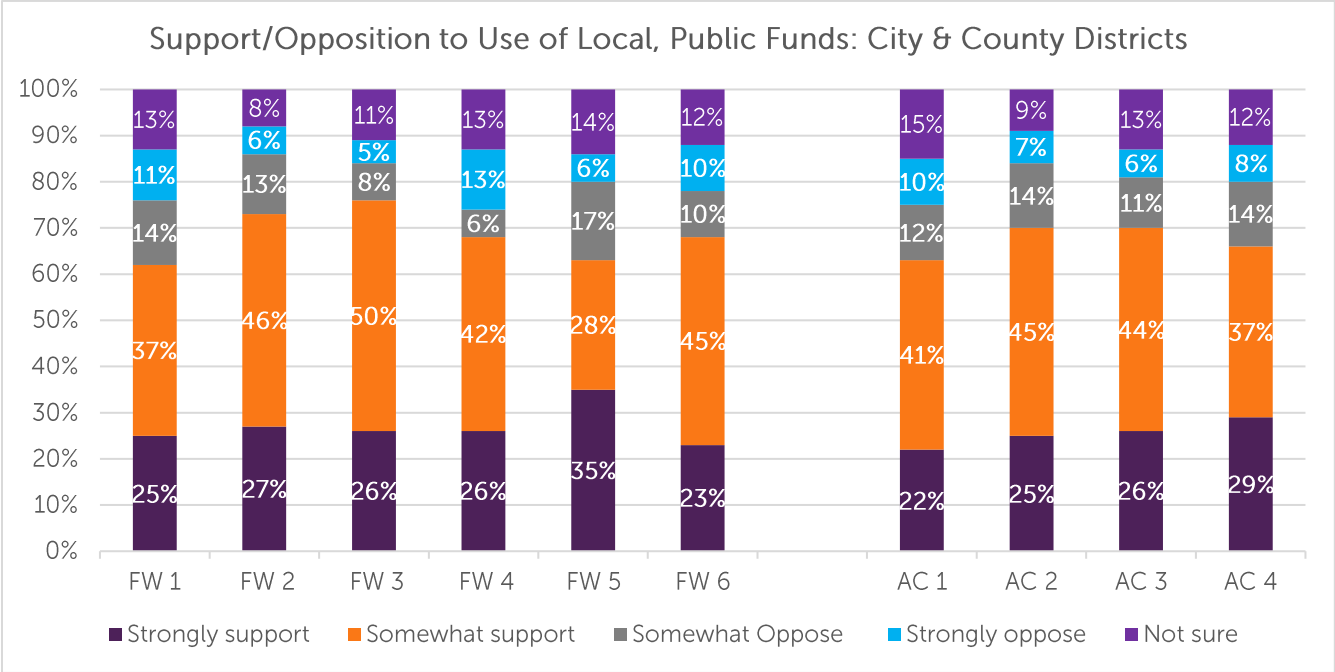
**Allen County Republicans**  
 71% support  
 (27% strongly)

**Allen County Democrats**  
 74% support  
 (33% strongly)

**Allen County Independents**  
 66% support  
 (21% strongly)

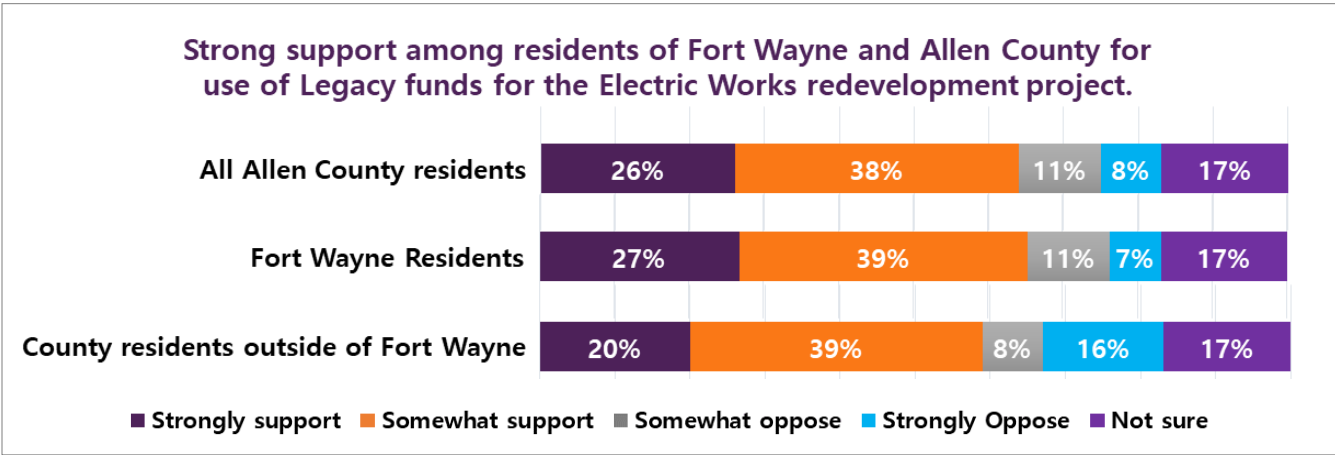
**Support varies somewhat by City Council and County Council districts.**

The combined measure of “strongly support” and “somewhat support” does not dip below 60% in any City or County Council district. However, there are differences among them. In Fort Wayne, support is strongest in District 3. In Allen County, support is weakest in District 1.



**There is strong support for the use of Legacy funds for the redevelopment of Electric Works.**

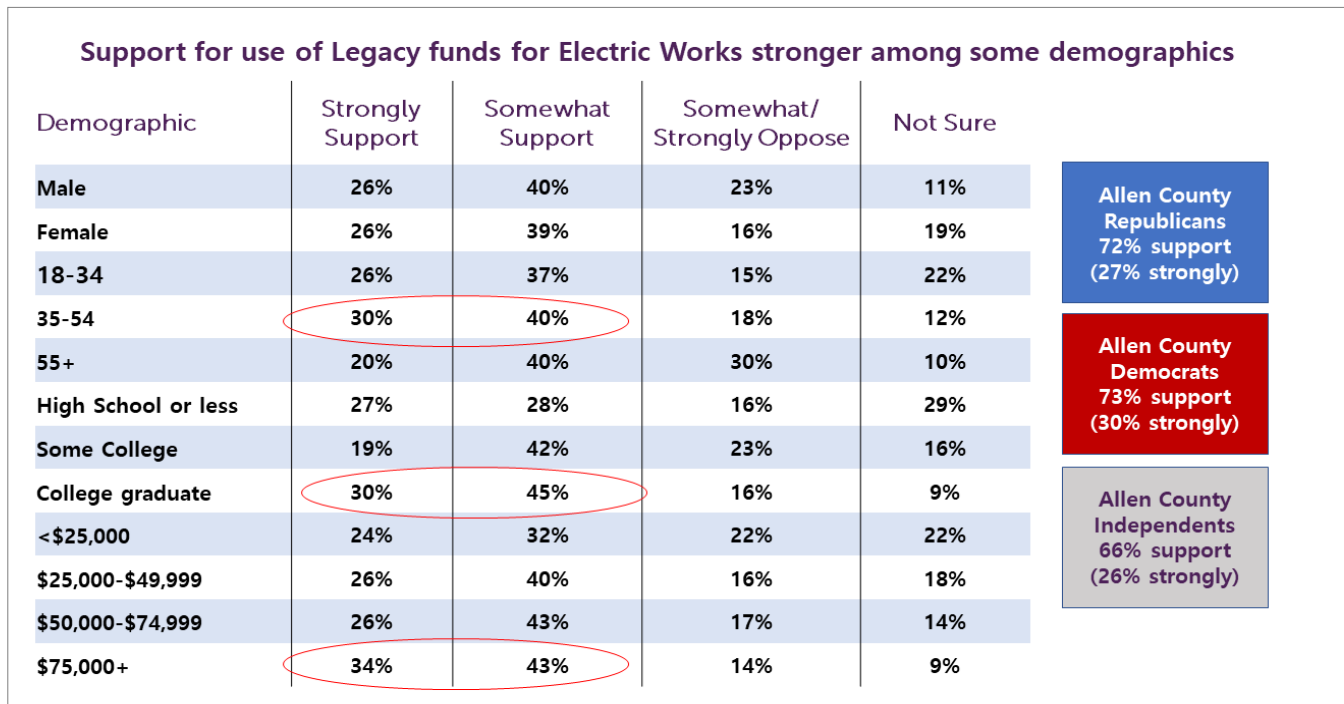
There is a similar pattern of support for the use of Legacy funds for the Electric Works redevelopment project,<sup>1</sup> except that support is slightly higher than use of local, public funds in general. Overall, 64% support the use of Legacy funds, 19% are opposed, and 13% are not sure.



<sup>1</sup> Respondents were informed: The City Council expressed a willingness to earmark \$13.6 million in Legacy funds as part of the needed \$65 million in local funding. The Legacy fund includes money from the sale of the city's utility company and can only be spent on transformational investment or projects, programs, or policies that will have positive, long-term community impact and serve as catalysts for other positive and desired change. Accessing funding requires approval from at least six of the nine council members.

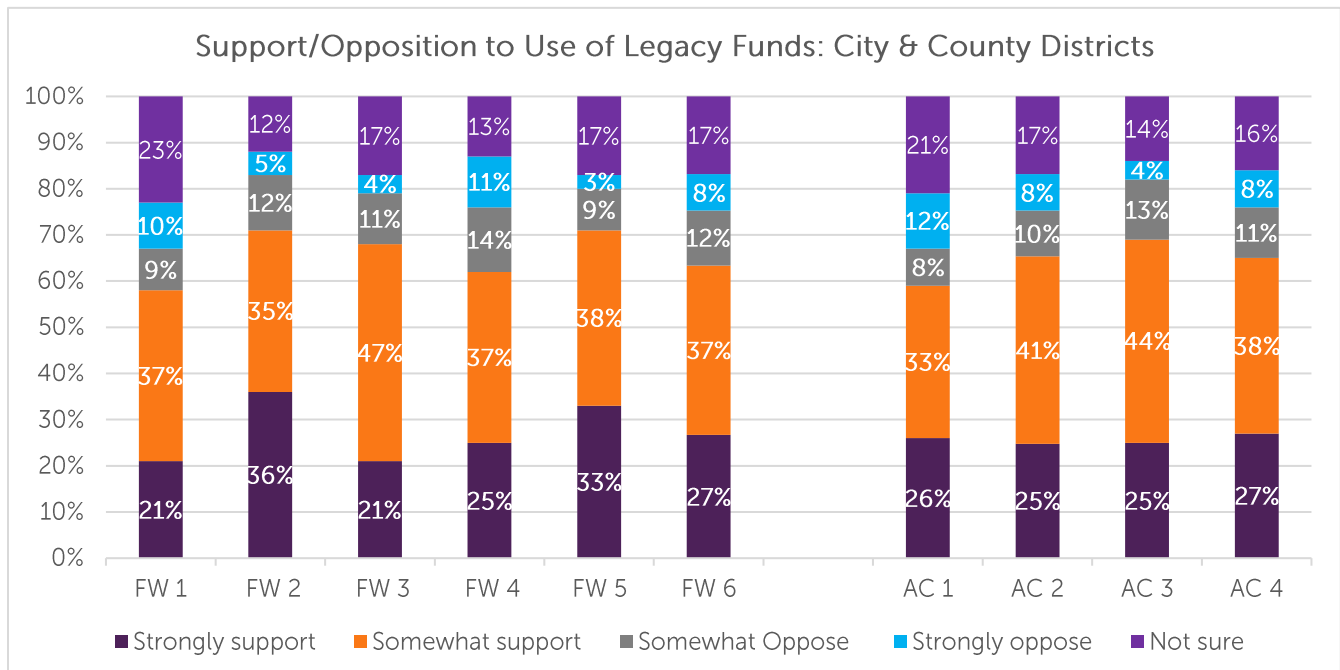
## County residents of all types support the use of Legacy funds for Electric Works.

Support for the use of Legacy funds for the redevelopment of Electric Works mirrors support for the use of local, public funds.



## Support for the use of Legacy funds varies somewhat by district.

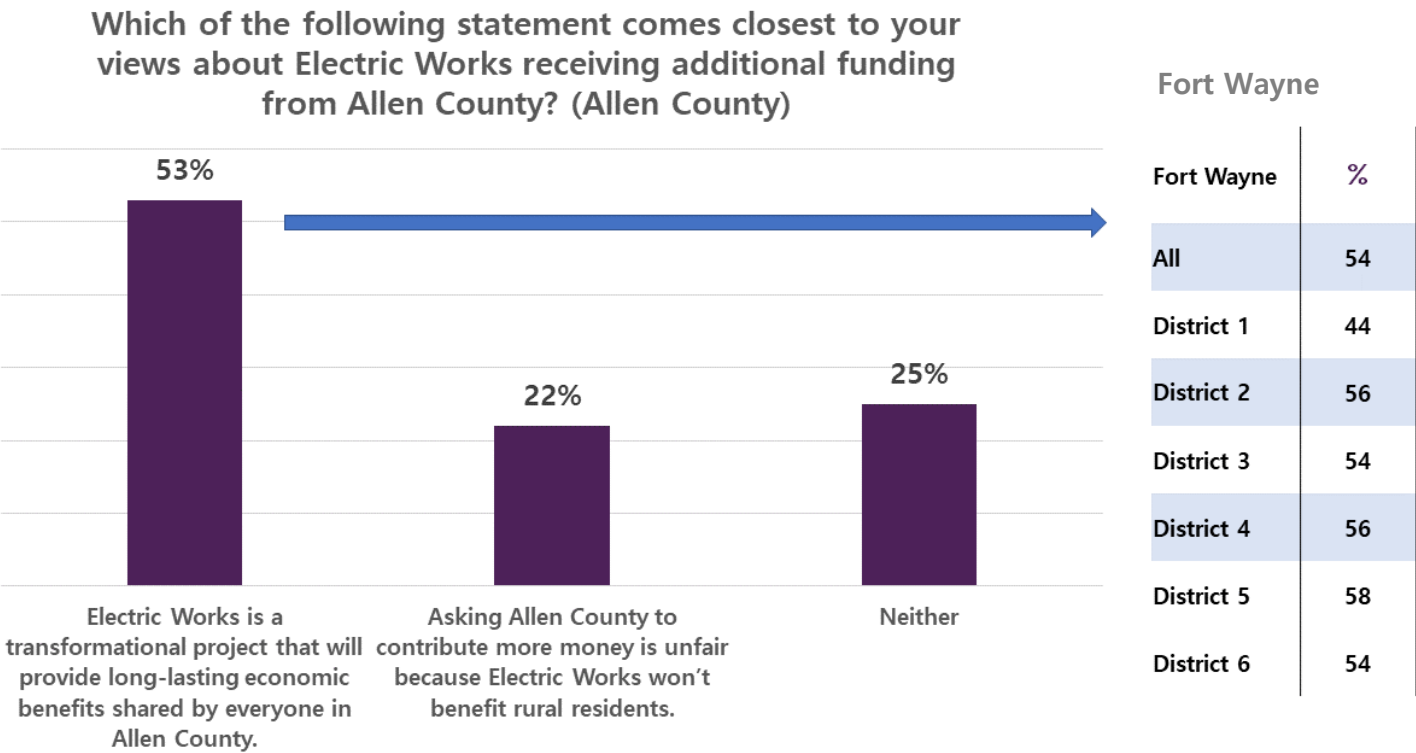
As with the use of local, public funds, the combined measure of “strongly support” and “somewhat support” does not dip below 60% in any City or County Council district. In Fort Wayne, support is strongest in Districts 2 and 5. In Allen County, support is strongest in District 3.





Electric Works is a transformational project.

The poll shows that residents, when thinking about the need for additional funding from Allen County, believe that Electric Works is a transformational project that necessitates more funding from the county.



There is strong public sentiment in favor of Electric Works.

The poll shows that residents, when thinking about the need for additional funding from Allen County, believe that Electric Works is a transformational project that necessitates more funding from the county. Figures below are for all Allen County Residents.

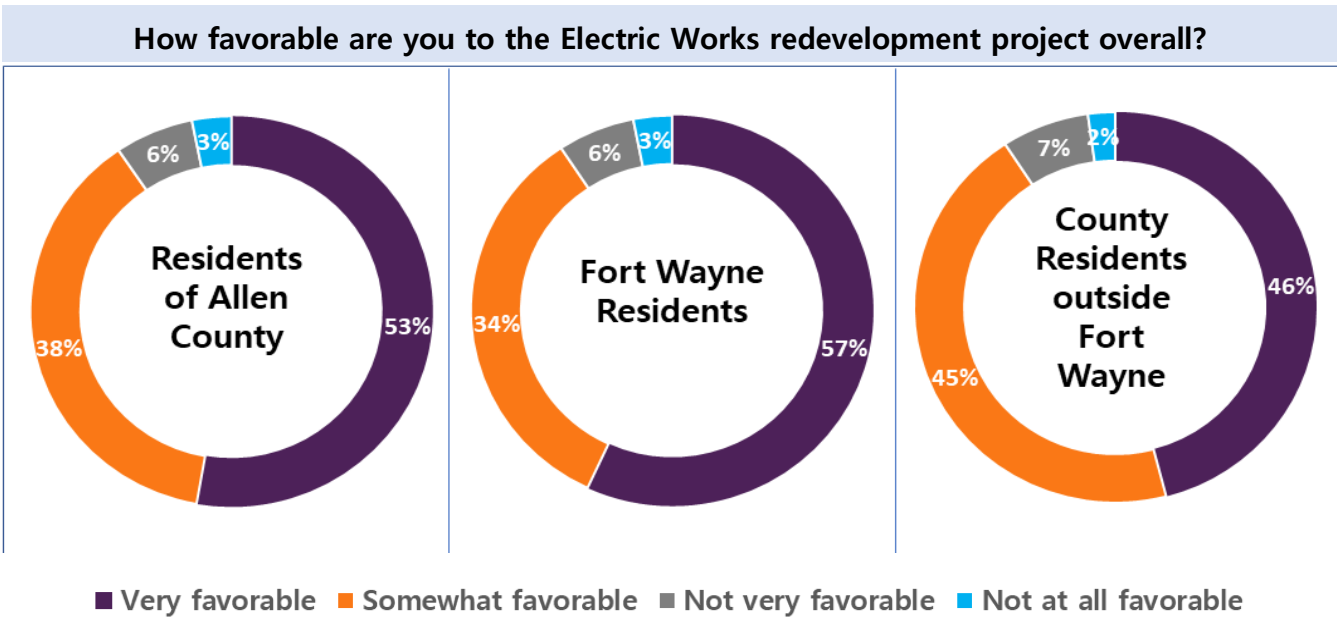
Statement About Electric Works	Agree
Electric Works is a good example of the old saying that sometimes you have to take a small risk to secure a big return.	84%
Electric Works will be successful in making Fort Wayne and Allen County a better place to live, just like the other public-private partnership investments in our community have.	81%
Fort Wayne and Allen County are moving in the right direction. The Electric Works development just moves us farther along the right path.	81%
Critics of the project have yet to buy into the positive hope that has galvanized our city and county. Electric Works will deliver as promised.	76%

**5. Residents of Fort Wayne and Allen County are highly favorable to the Electric Works redevelopment project. Planned components that are viewed most favorably include shopping, restaurants, and entertainment such as live music, a year-round public market, and an educational space for K-12 and higher education.**

**Ninety-one percent of Allen County Residents view the project favorably, with 53% having a “very favorable” opinion of it.**

More than 9 in 10 Allen County Residents (91%) indicate that they are either “very favorable” or “somewhat favorable” of the Electric Works redevelopment project, based on a description they were provided.<sup>2</sup>

- Fort Wayne Residents: 91% favorable, including 57% “very favorable.”
- County Residents outside of Fort Wayne: 91% favorable, including 46% “very favorable.”

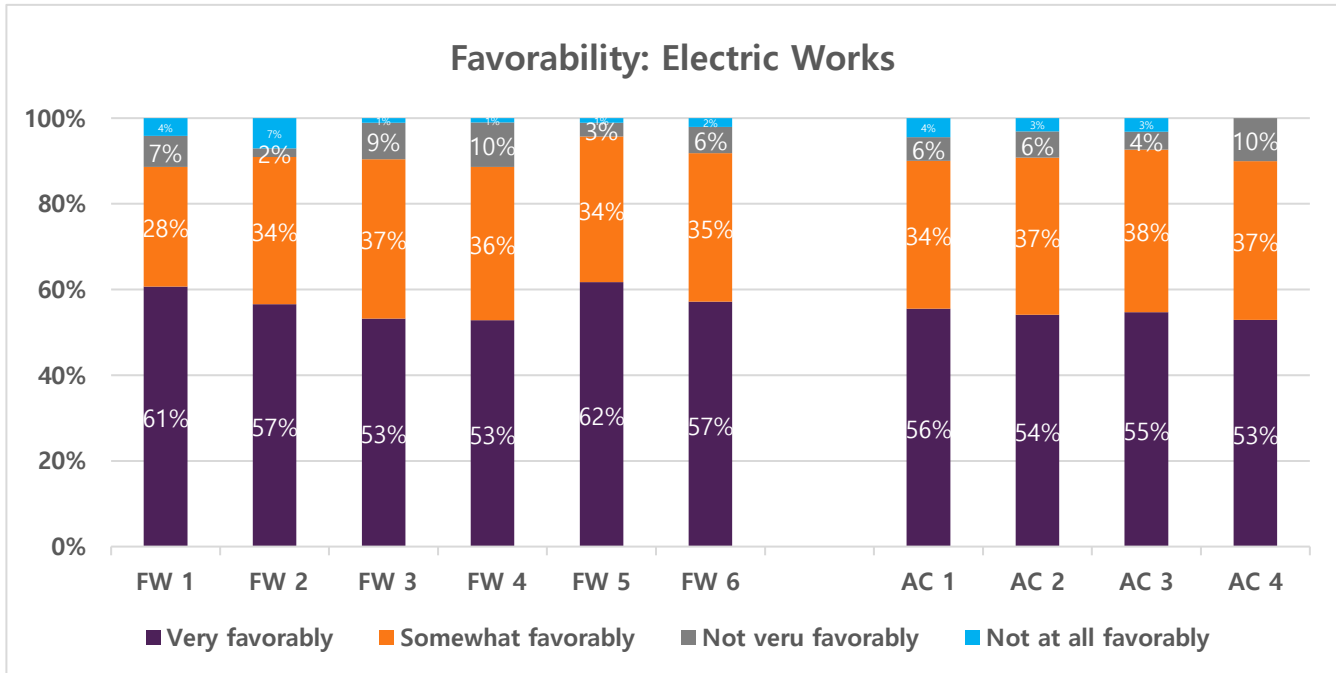


The Electric Works redevelopment project is viewed favorably in every City and County Council district, and among residents spanning all demographics and political affiliations.

<sup>2</sup> Respondents were provided with the following description: Electric Works is the name given to the redevelopment of the former GE small engine factory near downtown Fort Wayne. A public-private partnership between RTM Ventures, the City of Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the state and federal government, the project will transform the 18 building, 39-acre, 1.2 million square foot campus into a mixed-use innovation district. Modeled on successful downtown redevelopment efforts, Electric Works will feature class-A office space, state-of-the-art facilities sought by employers, and provide opportunities for all members of the Fort Wayne community to interact, dine, shop, and engage in recreational activities. The project will include: Incubator space for start-ups; Year-round public market; Educational space for K-12 and higher education; Residential apartments; Class A office space; Entrepreneur/co-worker space; and Shopping, restaurants, and entertainment such as live music.

A majority of residents in every City and County Council district are “very favorable.”

In Fort Wayne, favorability is highest in District 5, followed by District 1. In Allen County, there is little difference in favorability across the four council districts.



Baby Boomers with a college degree and higher income view the project the most favorably, but positive views of Electric Works are held by all.

There is high favorability for Electric Works among Allen County Residents of all types and political affiliations.

**Favorability for Electric Works is high across all demographics**

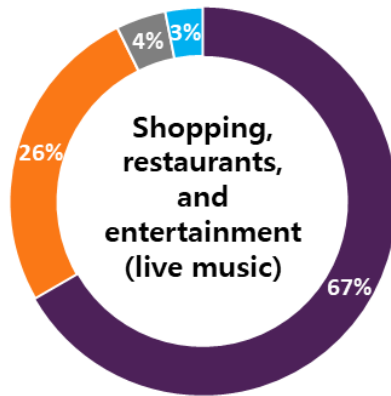
Demographic	Very favorably	Somewhat favorably	Not very favorably	Not at all favorably
Male	50%	40%	7%	3%
Female	56%	36%	6%	2%
18-34	52%	39%	7%	2%
35-54	62%	31%	5%	2%
55+	47%	39%	10%	4%
High School or less	55%	35%	8%	2%
Some College	51%	38%	9%	2%
College graduate	56%	38%	3%	3%
<\$25,000	45%	43%	8%	4%
\$25,000-\$49,999	57%	35%	5%	3%
\$50,000-\$74,999	56%	37%	6%	1%
\$75,000+	62%	31%	5%	2%

**Allen County Republicans**  
 92% favorable  
 (57% very)

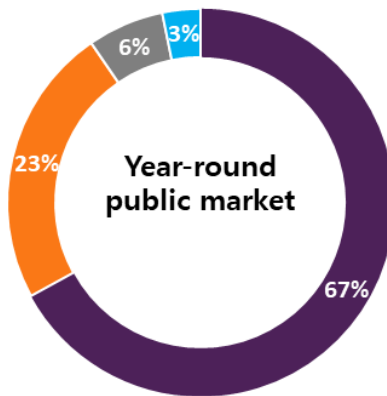
**Allen County Democrats**  
 94% favorable  
 (56% very)

**Allen County Independents**  
 88% favorable  
 (49% very)

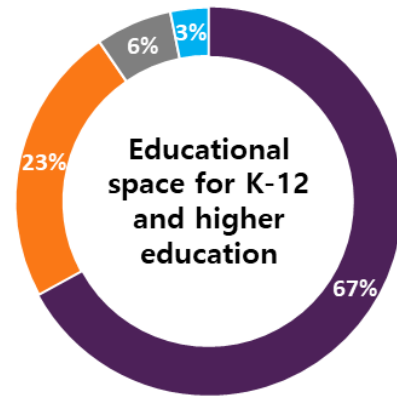
To better assess favorability toward Electric Works, respondents were asked the following question: *How favorable are you to each of the planned components of the Electric Works redevelopment project?* As the charts below demonstrate, residents of the county and city viewed all components favorably. In all cases, residents of Fort Wayne were more favorable than residents of Allen County who lived outside of the city.



Fort Wayne: 69% ★  
County-city: 59%

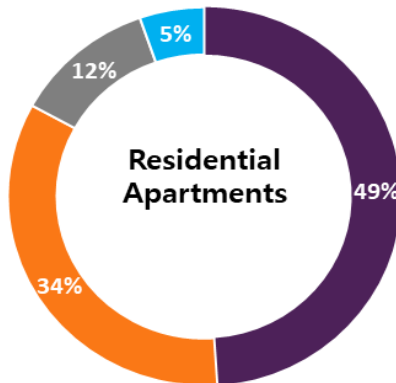


Fort Wayne: 67%  
County-city: 58%

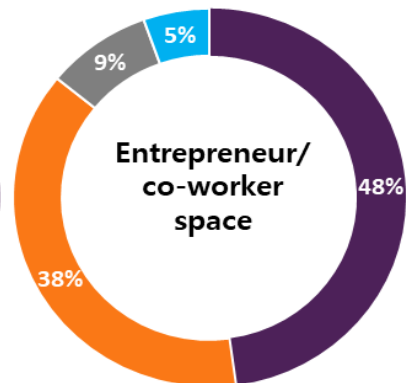


Fort Wayne: 67%  
County-city: 58%

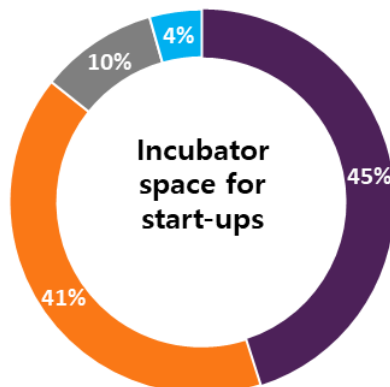
- Very favorable
- Somewhat favorable
- Not very favorable
- Not at all favorable



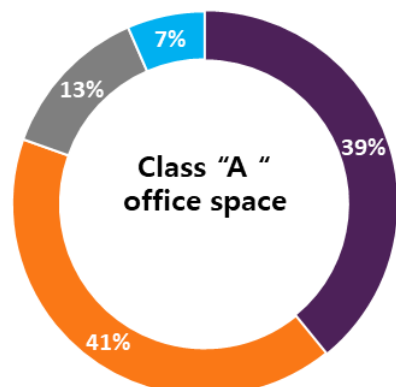
Fort Wayne: 51%  
County-city: 40%



Fort Wayne: 49%  
County-city: 40%



Fort Wayne: 47%  
County-city: 37%



Fort Wayne: 45%  
County-city: 34%

★ Percentages = "very favorably."

## Appendix: Maps Used in Poll (respondents could scroll and enlarge)

